The Linkage Excellence in Management & Leadership Series

Idea Marketing

Featuring Seth Godin

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Dear Participant:

Welcome to *The 2001 Linkage Excellence in Management & Leadership Series.* This seminar series is designed to help you develop new approaches to marketing and selling your ideas. This distance learning program will introduce you to some of the world's outstanding and innovative thinkers in the areas of change, communication and leadership. Participating in this seminar series will help you learn how to make these innovative ideas yours and apply them successfully.

Today's program, *Idea Marketing,* features Seth Godin. Seth is a leading author and speaker about marketing and selling "ideaviruses" in today's fast moving interconnected world. In today's program Seth will help you become an effective leader who possesses the ability to market and spread your ideas. Communicating your message and getting others to enthusiastically embrace them are the hallmarks of outstanding leaders. Seth Godin will show you ways to spread your message so that you will leapfrog ahead of the competition and your ideas will be heard and adopted.

Specifically the program will help provide insight in the following leadership skills and competencies:

- **Conceptual Thinking - Innovation:** The ability to create or improve new ideas, products, and services by challenging assumptions and thinking out of the box
- **Change Management:** The skill of adapting to and thriving in times of internal or external change
- **Communication:** The skill of communicating and relating to a broad range of people internally and externally

Seth Godin is a bestselling author, entrepreneur and agent of change. He is the author of *Permission Marketing* chosen by *Fortune* as one of the best business books. P*ermission Marketing* was an Amazon.com 100 bestseller for a year and caused *Promo* magazine to call him "the prime minister" of permission marketing. *Permission Marketing* is available on line.

His latest book *Unleashing the Idea Virus* has been featured in *USA Today, The New York Times, The Industry Standard* and *Wired Online*. The book broke new ground in the ways that is was distributed. More than 100,000 people received the digital version of the book during its first week of internet publication. *Unleashing the Idea Virus* counters traditional marketing wisdom and argues that information can spread most effectively from customer to customer. Seth calls this customer-to-customer dialogue the "ideavirus."

Mr. Godin helped Yahoo! Integrate direct marketing, permission marketing and internet promotions into the company's Fusion Marketing Online program for its clients worldwide. He is also a columnist for *Fast Company* writing about change and how corporations and individuals can successfully deal with the massive rifts our economy is facing.

Seth's writing and successful speaking engagements focus on marketing ideas in new, more customer-centered, interactive ways. Traditional marketing is based on interrupting you to try to sell you on a new product, service or idea. It blankets a market in order to find the few customers who might be interested. Seth tells us that it is expensive and inefficient and often produces only a short-term gain.

Leaders and managers need to learn effective ways to communicate messages. The best leaders possess the ability to market and sell their ideas. With the birth of the internet, the conventional rules of communication have changed. Ideas must be active and infect everyone. Seth calls these active infecting ideas an "ideavirus."

For almost any organization, the biggest challenge and expense involve getting people to know what you have to offer so that they will want to work with you to adopt your ideas and market them to others. Today's program will provide you with specific approaches and suggestions to improve the effectiveness, spread, and infection rate of your "ideavirus."

These Participant Materials have been designed to complement Seth Godin's presentation. Use them to augment or supplement the presentation and to take notes. At the end of Seth's presentation, you will be able to submit questions via phone, fax or email.

Learning is a mental activity that requires more than passively watching a speaker. Simply watching today's program will not enable you to use these new organizational and personal attitudes and approaches to initiate an immediate change in your organization's culture. Actively using these new skills on a personal level can help you begin to make the language and attitudes your own.

Achieving leadership excellence in the current business environment requires practice and follow-through, as well as reflection. Use the Pre-presentation activities on pages 5–8 to prepare yourself for the program. Also included in your participant guide are post presentation activities to help you think about ways to use the new skills you learned to broaden and deepen your personal knowledge.

Table of contents

SECTION 1

Satellite Program Materials

What you will learn

By participating in today's program with Seth Godin you will learn to:

- Develop a framework for marketing and selling your ideas

- Evaluate your company's ability to market ideas to your customers

- Infect your customers and colleagues with your ideavirus

- Develop and spread your own ideavirus to be more effective as a leader

Pre-presentation activities

Pre-reading:

Read or review some of the following books authored by Seth Godin as well as some of other authors whose ideas amplify and support Seth's message.

- *Unleashing the Idea Virus*, Seth Godin, Do You Zoom Inc., 2000.

- *Permission Marketing*, Seth Godin, www.permission.com

- *Ideas Rule*, Seth Godin, (reprints of Seth Godin's columns for *Fast Company*) www.fastcompany.com/team/sgodin.html

- *The Tipping Point*, Malcolm Gladwell, www.gladwell.com

- Ideas, books, etc., by Tom Peters, www.tompeters.com

- Take time to read Section 1: Satellite Program Materials prior to attending the program. Familiarizing yourself with the materials and information Seth Godin covers in the televised portion of the program will enhance your learning experience.

  Reading the Satellite Program Materials prior to the program will help you to understand Seth's unique approach. You will become familiar with the framework for marketing and selling ideas.

Words and Concepts:

The following is a list of words and concepts that may seem familiar to you. Seth Godin uses these words to explain his concept of the ideavirus. Jot down your current definition of these words or terms. We'll come back to these definitions later to see if you can add to your definition based on Seth's presentation.

Please write your current (pre-program) definitions and/or understandings of the meaning of these words and concepts.

1. Idea

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2. Virus

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3. Ideavirus

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4. Medium:

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5. Velocity

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6. Smoothness

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7. Hive

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8. Sneezer

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9. Vector

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10. Persistence

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11. Amplifier

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12. Manifesto

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Leadership Assessment Instrument:

Complete the Leadership Assessment Instrument™ (LAI), which appears in Section 2 beginning on page 23. The LAI was researched and developed by Linkage Inc., in partnership with Dr. Warren Bennis. It focuses on the five personal characteristics, or competencies, essential to effective leadership and on the five skills leaders use to put these competencies into practice. Knowing your strengths and opportunities for development may help make today's presentation particularly relevant.

Focus on those competency areas and skills identified in the introduction as Seth Godin gives his presentation.

Seth Godin – Participant Guide

Seth Godin's premise is that ideas can become contagious in much the same way that viruses do. On the surface this seems to make sense. We've all had the experience of having a song running through our brains, or heard so much about a book or other product that we've gone out to buy it.

This common sense idea flies in the face of the way modern marketing is practiced. Millions and millions of dollars are spent trying to control, count and figure out what people see, want and buy. Seth Godin calls this "interruption marketing."

Seth believes that interruption marketing is neither cost-effective, nor effective. Instead he believes that messages can be more efficiently spread by establishing a foundation and process so that interested people can market to each other. Just "Ignite consumer networks and then get out of the way and let them talk."

Idea + Virus = Ideavirus

Seth tells us that for the first 100 years or so of our history the country was about building big and efficient farms. For the next 100 years or so people focused on building bigger and better factories. This next century will be about ideas.

Unfortunately, no one yet knows for sure how to build a factory for ideas. We do know that if you get people to accept and embrace your ideas you win. You win financially, gain power and can change the world. The Holy Grail for anyone who sells ideas is to "unleash an ideavirus."

An ideavirus is a big idea that captures its target audience, influencing and changing the population it infects. Ideaviruses are more than word of mouth. They are ideas, products, messages that spread like wildfire and catch hold with those in its path.

Another property of an ideavirus is the speed at which it spreads. Word of mouth spreads ideas within a relatively small group and then the spreading process slows down and dies out. With ideaviruses using the internet, ideas are spread globally and almost instantaneously. Because it is so easy to send ideas to others, the true ideavirus keeps spreading exponentially as more and more people spread it to their contacts and beyond.

Can you think of some ideas that have done that?

Manifesto

In previous economies there were limits. Farms were limited by the size of the crop and therefore the numbers of people that they could feed. Factories could only produce so many products and get them into the hands of the people who wanted them.

Ideas are different. They replicate easily and well and often get more powerful and valuable as more people learn about them.

Seth asks these questions about ideaviruses.

- Where does an ideavirus live?
- How does an ideavirus manifest itself?
- What does it look like?

Ideas of all kinds, Seth believes are similar. He calls them manifestos. An idea manifesto is a "powerful, logical essay" that assembles a bunch of existing ideas and creates a new one. Manifestos take on a variety of shapes. These may include:

- A written essay
- An image
- A song
- A product or process

The medium does not matter. What matters is that your manifesto changes the way people think, talk, or act, and creates value.

Medium

According to Seth Godin's theory, all sorts of ideas regardless of format are lumped into the same category, manifestos. The medium is the way an idea or manifested is "encapsulated."

"A manifesto can be a picture, a phrase, a written article a movie, or even a mathematical formula." The purpose of the medium is to transmit the idea virus smoothly and quickly. The medium is the substance in which the idea lives.

The medium is the form it takes to communicate its message. It is the idea that creates value and that changes the way people think, talk or act.

Why ideaviruses are so important

1. We live in a winner dominant world. So it's important if you want to win to be first and to be dominate in your field.

2. While in the past we focused on making and growing things, now we focus on making ideas. Therefore, spreading them and having others know and adapt them is critical.

3. People are more connected than ever. Maintaining and enlarging these connections happens more and more often and is more and more important. Things spread by word of "mouse," flying with incredible speed throughout the world.

4. People are hungry to understand the new and stay on the cutting edge. We are a country that thrives on the new and being in the know about what's new.

5. There are more early adopters eager for the next new great thing than ever before. More and more people want to be in the know about the newest best thing. Look at the success of such magazines as *Wired, Fast Company* and *PC Magazine*.

6. Creating and owning a successful ideavirus can produce tremendous profits. (Zip Drives, MP3.com, iMac, to name a few).

Launching an Ideavirus

Current interruption marketing approaches use a scattershot approach, spraying millions of messages (ads) and at populations only some of which might be potential markets for their product or idea. The marketers develop a strong brand with recognized characteristics, but it is hard and expensive way to attract new customers.

The secret of launching ideaviruses is to help consumers to talk to each other. This is not easy to do. There are ways to launch your ideavirus that will help them be successful.

One of the key elements of launching an ideavirus is to concentrate the message. You need to totally "dominate and amaze" the population you have targeted. The secret is to identify this group and concentrate your efforts here.

Velocity

Seth Godin tells us that being number one carries enormous benefits in almost every field. There isn't an even distribution of rewards. This is especially true in networked businesses. An ideavirus lets you make something happen to your business and your product that brings you market dominance and clear financial rewards. For example, the market capitalization of Priceline, eBay and Amazon approaches 95% of the total market capitalization of every other consumer e-commerce stock combined.

Ideaviruses are often faced with brickwall filters. Brickwall filters wipe out certain things and let the rest through. There is no room for extra effort or second place – you are out, or you are in. Ideaviruses are like that in that they are win/lose propositions. They need to have high velocity to become a bonafide epidemic.

Velocity, then, is a measure of how fast the idea spreads from one person to another. The multiplier effect is large and fast steps lead to more people being infected before it dies out. In order to be successful, Seth believes ideaviruses need to have a high velocity.

Seth reminds us that filling a vacuum is far easier than going second. If the velocity of a virus isn't fast enough then a competitor can come in and take over. What you want to do is get enough velocity to dominate as the "original" in that market.

Can you think of name brands that dominate a market and become the generic term of that idea or product?

Is it important to spread your ideas quickly and dominate the thinking in your organization or to your external customers?

Smoothness

In addition to velocity, the other essential characteristic of successful ideaviruses is the concept of smoothness. Seth tells us that the smoothness of a particular ideavirus is how easy it is to use and spread. Does it take just one click to tell someone about a new, terrific idea, product, or process?

It is easy to tell someone about something obvious like your new hairdresser. It is harder to tell someone about a new message therapist as it maybe more difficult to bring it up and to know the words to accurately describe this experience.

Seth describes how really smooth viruses like Hotmail spread by themselves. When you send someone an email from Hotmail there is a small advertisement on the bottom of the email. According to Seth, there is a direct relationship between how smooth a product is and how quickly it catches on.

Sneezers

Seth Godin tells us that some people are more likely to spread an ideavirus. While some people are dead ends, others are eager to spread the word and share what they've heard about, tried, read, or seen. These are the people Malcolm Gladwell, author of the *Tipping Point* called Connectors, Mavens and Salespeople.

Credibility and trust are important characteristics of Sneezers. People have to trust what they say and believe it enough to act on it. (Gladwell describes Paul Revere as an example of a successful Sneezer, while William Dawes and others who rode that night were not so successful at spreading their message.)

Sneezers are the core of any ideavirus. Sneezers are the ones people believe and trust when they tell them about something new.

Two kinds of sneezers

Promiscuous Sneezers

Promiscuous Sneezers are the members of a group who can be counted on to try to sell their favorite ideavirus to almost anyone. (Your cousin the insurance salesman is one example.) Seth Godin describes what he calls promiscuous sneezers in the following way:

- Promiscuous sneezers can be motivated by money or other inducements.
- Promiscuous sneezers are rarely held in high esteem as opinion leaders, but may be effective if they are promiscuous enough.

Powerful Sneezers

Powerful sneezers have influence and cannot be bought. Powerful sneezers take risks when they introduce something new. If what they introduce is not successful, their influence is reduced.

Powerful sneezers have the ability to set styles and people will follow them. They are "cool." Seth gives us the example of Harrison Ford reversing the trend of hatlessness with his fedora in the *Raiders of the Lost Ark* movies.

Powerful sneezers are trusted to have high standards. The *New York Times* is a powerful sneezer because people trust it to deal with serious issues with the highest journalistic standards and levels of integrity.

The "Hive"

The Hive is a distinct group of people who share a set of characteristics: the ways in which they communicate among themselves; spoken and/or unspoken rules and standards; a common history. Some of these examples might include: Deadheads, readers of *Fast Company*, followers of *National Public Radio*, fraternity brothers, etc.

In order to win with an ideavirus you need to choose your hive first, then build the idea. Targeted marketing is not in itself a new idea. But, as Seth Godin describes it, a hive is a market with a problem and a large number of sneezers.

It is critical to the success of an ideavirus (that it go "viral") that the hive be small enough for you to overwhelm it and dominate it. You also want to choose a hive through which you can move your ideavirus quickly.

Be careful to choose the hive that respects the core value of your virus. Different hives want and need different things. Understanding the real wants and needs of your hive is critical to making a successful match and seeing your ideavirus go viral.

It is, Seth tells us, far better to pick smaller hives and conquer them a few at a time. Identify consumers when they are "grouped in bunches and then allow the concentrated essence of your virus to spread to other hives."

Vector

Seth Godin says that ideas don't spread evenly and nicely through a population. People are most likely to send it in one direction or another. What path do you want your ideavirus to take? What Sneezers do you want to influence?

You want to send your ideavirus to people who will "get" it and send it onto others. The vector, Seth believes, controls the hive. The characteristics and needs of your product or service will make it more likely to be a natural target for some kinds of users than others. Seth uses the example of products sent over the web. If you are sending a product that needs a lot of bandwidth and special software you will limit who will be interested. It is more than giving people access to your product. You want to send your product out and have people sell it to others for you.

Three factors when considering the vector of your ideavirus

1. Who it starts with
    - We think about which direction to send an idea based on which direction it came from.

2. Who it resonates with
    - It makes sense to send the idea to those on whom it will have an impact. Send it to people who will be interested in your idea.

- People want to keep their reputations as powerful sneezers and so only want to spread ideas that they can relate to and that they believe have merit.

- We will spread ideas to people who are easy to access.

3. What's easy?

- The medium drives the spread of ideas to a very large extent.

- Having to go through several steps to spread an idea will often limit how fast and wide an idea will be spread.

Persistence

Seth Godin describes really long lasting and meaningful ideas and products as having persistence. They stay with us and are used so often that you are constantly reminded of the high esteem in which their users have placed them. Seth sees the Palm Pilot as an example of an extremely persistent and successful ideavirus.

Persistent viruses are overwhelmingly used by the members of the hive. Anyone who is not on board with this new idea or product will feel left behind and left out.

A persistent idea tips a hive so that the usage of the idea or product is so widespread that it becomes a given. It is the "standard" and the product. Often, if a product is particularly persistent, even if a better product or idea emerges, it will not be dislodged from its now loyal users.

Amplifier

Seth believes that spreading a virus by word of mouth is not enough. These unamplified word of mouth ideas die off too soon for many businesses. Marketers want to create a system to market the ideavirus that amplifies its positives and dampens its negatives.

Create a system that makes spreading your message part of the process and system of using it. Make the system and process part of the product so that users increase the volume of its message.

Seth describes an internet company that helps you write letters of complaint to a company, government agency or other entity. At the same time it helps you send the message to others who might be interested in this issue. Thus, the effect of your message is amplified.

Are there some messages that you want to send, that you feel should be amplified? Are there any ways that you can this to do this?

Crossing the chasm with an ideavirus

Seth describes the process of getting a new idea or product widely used as one of crossing the chasm (from Geoffrey Moore's book, *Crossing the Chasm*). Moore describes the chasm as the gap between the early adapters and the rest of us who need some specific and often immediate benefit in order to adapt a new process or product.

Early adapters are "nerds" who love new things. They like the unique challenge of wrestling with new products and ideas. Most of the rest of us like to keep using what we have and are not eager to change to the new thing.

Early adapters and pre-chasm people want something "cool" or new. Post-chasm people want something that works. The difference can often be seen when the latest software comes out and some people can't wait to get their hands on it. Others need to be pushed and pulled into using it. The post-chasm people want to know why it's better and why they should go through the trouble to change.

The sequence to use in unleashing your ideavirus

1. Invent a virusworthy idea.
2. Make it smooth and persistent.
3. Encourage powerful sneezers to use it.
4. Get their permission to follow-up.

Ideavirus tactics

- **Make it virusworthy.** Make it an idea worth talking about, using, and/or listening to.
- **Identify the hive.** To get the full benefit the ideavirus must dominate your hive.
- **Expose the idea.** Get it to the right people and do whatever it takes to get them into it as quickly as possible. Pay them if you have to. Never charge for it if you can help it.
- **Figure out what you want the sneezers to say.** Don't let the sneezer decide what to say about your ideavirus so that their sneezing is optimized.
- **Give sneezers the tools they need to spread the virus**. Make it easy for potential sneezers to spread the idea. Give him/her a way to send it on. Reward people for spreading your ideavirus.
- **Once the consumer has volunteered his attention get permission.** The goal is to get people's attention. Then you need to build a permanent, reliable chain of communication. You can use this communication for future enhancements and to market new ideas.
- **Amaze your audience so that they will reinforce the virus and keep it growing.** Nurture the attention you receive and build a self-reinforcing virus that lasts and lasts.
- **Admit that few viruses last forever. Embrace the lifecycle of the virus.** Recognize that the needs of the virus change over time. The benefits of the virus also change over time. Leverage your expenditure for those maximum moments.

What will happen as permission marketing and ideaviruses spread and become commonplace?

1. The race is won by those who are swift. Latecomers will get hurt.
2. The cost of spreading a virus will increase. The benefits to the powerful sneezer will increase.
3. There will be a significant benefit to becoming a powerful sneezer. We will see fewer institutional efforts to be powerful and more individual ones.
4. It is going to be noisy and loud and cluttered as we make the transition to this kind of marketing. There will be a few huge winners but not many who dominate. After that, there will be a return to some equilibrium and there is hope that the good ideas will win.

What do you think?

In summary

While in the past our economy was focused on agriculture and manufacturing, we now focus on ideas. Seth Godin presented his approach to thinking about and spreading new ideas and products. He calls this permission marketing. Introduce new ideas and products to people. Then get out of the way and let them share and sell them to others for you.

Our new challenge is to think of effective ways to spread the big ideas that capture our target audiences and overwhelm them. Seth calls these big ideas ideaviruses. They are manifestos that are captured in a medium and spread to others.

In order to be successful, ideaviruses need to be marketed with velocity and smoothness to the target audience Seth calls a hive. A hive is a group of like-minded and like-motivated individuals who can spread an idea.

The successful ideas are attractive to those individuals Godin calls "sneezers." He describes two different kinds of sneezers. Promiscuous sneezers sneeze all over to anyone who will listen and can be bought. They can still be effective.

The second kind of sneezer, Seth calls powerful sneezers. These are individuals who are trusted and believed. People listen to them and adopt their ideas, try out their recommendations and adopt their ways and buy and use their suggested products. (Think of Oprah Winfrey and Martha Stewart as two examples of powerful sneezers.)

Several other elements are essential to effectively spreading ideaviruses. These are velocity, vector and smoothness. Velocity is the speed at which ideaviruses are spread. Smoothness refers to the ease of spreading them. The vector refers to the direction the virus takes as it spreads through a hive.

Additional elements that contribute to ideas "going viral" include those Seth calls persistence and amplifier. Persistence refers to the staying power, longevity and extent of usage of an idea. While the amplifier involves turning up the volume so that no one could miss getting the message.

Seth described the difficulty of getting an ideavirus across the chasm from early adopters to those "laggards" who are reluctant to change. Effective marketers will take into account the different purposes each group has for products and ideas when finding effective ways to "cross the chasm."

Finally, Seth suggests a step-by-step sequence of tactics for marketers to use to develop and spread viral ideaviruses.

When this session has concluded

- Turn to the end of these materials. Complete the Participant Evaluation Form on page 53 and return it to your Site Coordinator.

- Your feedback is integral to ensuring the integrity of this and future programs. We take pride in providing relevant, thought-provoking, and enlightening programs. But we rely on you to help us make it happen!

Post-presentation activities

Now that you have participated in the Satellite Broadcast and reviewed the materials in your guide, write down the definitions to the following words based on Seth Godin's presentation.

1. Idea

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2. Virus

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3. Ideavirus

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4. Medium

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5. Velocity

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6. Smoothness

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7. Hive

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8. Sneezer

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9. Vector

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10. Persistence

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11. Amplifier

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12. Manifesto

Self-Reflection

Take time to consider your feelings and practices regarding the following questions.

1. What are some of the important "ideaviruses" you would like to spread in your organization? To your customers both internal and external?

2. Are you a sneezer? If yes - What kind of sneezer are you? If you are not a sneezer, What could you do to become one? How could being a powerful sneezer increase your effectiveness as a leader and manager in your organization?

3. What steps could you take to launch your ideavirus? How would you go about making it smooth and persistent?

4. Have you considered who is in your hive? What group do you want to influence? What do they have in common? What strategies can you use to get them to adopt your ideavirus?

5. How can you increase the velocity of your ideavirus?

6. How can you identify the vector you want your ideavirus to travel?

7. What are the challenges and supports within your organization that you need to consider getting your idea virus to go viral?

SECTION 2

The Leadership Assessment Instrument™

About the Leadership Assessment Instrument™

The Leadership Assessment Instrument™ (LAI) was researched and developed by Linkage, Inc., in partnership with Dr. Warren Bennis. It focuses on the five personal characteristics, or competencies, essential to effective leadership and on the five skills with which leaders put these competencies into practice. Knowing your strengths and opportunities for development may help make today's presentation particularly relevant.

The five categories the instrument assesses are:

1. Focused drive
2. Emotional intelligence
3. Building trust/enabling others
4. Conceptual thinking
5. Systems thinking

Each competency and skill has a definition and an associated set of behaviors that demonstrate that competency or skill. Additionally, each competency is described by ten of these behaviors and each skill by five. Furthermore, the ten behaviors for each competency are organized into two groups of five, each corresponding to a component of that competency.

Let's take a closer look at the five competency categories in greater detail.

Focused Drive

The competency of focusing on a goal and harnessing your energy in order to meet that goal—a balance between the components of:

■ Focus: The ability to identify an important goal or vision and to channel efforts at specific targets that support that goal or vision.

■ Drive: The ability to persevere, sacrifice (when necessary), and expend high degrees of energy to reach high levels of performance.

Emotional Intelligence

The competency of understanding and mastering your emotions (and those of others) in a way that instills confidence, motivates, inspires, and enhances group effectiveness—a balance between the components of:

■ Perception: The ability to read the emotions and thoughts of others through the use of insight and analytical skills.

■ Emotional Maturity: The ability to master emotions and cope with stress in a way that instills confidence, motivates, and enhances group effectiveness.

Trusted Influence

The competency of evoking trust from others and placing trust in others to enable them to succeed—a balance between the components of:

- Commitment: The ability to evoke trust from others by keeping commitments, adhering to high ethical standards and principles, and building shared goals or values.

- Empowerment: The ability to help others reach higher levels of performance through trust, delegation, participation, and coaching.

Conceptual Thinking

The competency of conceiving and selecting innovative strategies and ideas for your organization—a balance of the components of:

- Innovation: The ability to create/enhance ideas, products, and services that lead to bottom-line success.

- Big-Picture Thinking: The ability to see all of the forces, events, entities, and people that are affecting (or are being affected by) the situation at hand.

Systems Thinking

The competency of rigorously and systematically connecting processes, events and systems—a balance between the components of:

- Mental Discipline: The ability to sort through ambiguity and alternatives in a way that crystallizes and puts ideas into action.

- Process Orientation: The ability to increase overall learning and performance by designing, implementing, and/or connecting processes.

While today's program is most relevant to conceptual thinking, trusted influence and systems thinking, having an awareness of your rating in each area provides insight and may make today's program more meaningful. Instructions for completing and scoring the assessment are provided on the following pages.

Purpose and overview

The purpose of this Leadership Self-Assessment is to provide a leadership profile based on the competencies necessary for strong, superior leadership. The data that you provide will enable you to construct a profile, complete with areas of strength and areas for future development.

Please complete the instrument by assessing your own behaviors and skills according to the directions below. Be honest—the more rigorous you are, the better you can target your developmental needs. Remember, the instrument is meant to assess how you believe that you actually are; not how you think that you should be.

Directions

For each of the 50 items listed on the following pages, consider how much the stated behavior characterizes your own behaviors, thoughts, intentions, or skills in on-the-job situations, and then rate yourself in the space provided according to the following scale:

3 = I often demonstrate this behavior

2 = I sometimes demonstrate this behavior

1 = I hardly ever demonstrate this behavior

Use the enclosed answer sheet (page 30) to record your answers. After recording your answers, add up the totals for each competency and then transfer the overall competency scores to the competency profile sheet on page 31.

Leadership Self-Assessment Questions

1. I balance multiple tasks and prioritize when faced with limited time and/or resources.

2. I create a positive environment—even when it appears "all is lost"—by expressing optimism and offering encouragement to team members.

3. I keep a mental record of every commitment that I make and follow through on my promises.

4. I steer through ambiguity and "information clutter" to resolve complex problems.

5. I ask questions to try to piece together "unrelated" information, events, etc.

6. I build momentum by spending 90 percent of my time on the top 10 percent of my priority list.

7. I view my "wins" with pride and humility.

8. I operate by a value-driven work philosophy that is grounded on clear principles.

9. I adhere to a disciplined process for sorting out alternatives and arriving at the best option when approaching a problem or project.

10. I make connections between and among information, events, etc. that reveal key issues, problems, or opportunities.

11. I display single-mindedness by unstoppably directing my energy at specific targets.

12. I persuasively and effectively reassure teams and/or individuals in the face of setbacks or seemingly insurmountable obstacles.

13. I identify and find ways to meet the needs, expectations, and wants of others up, down, and across the organization.

14. I test ideas and assumptions by carefully reviewing ideas with thought leaders and critical thinkers within my organization.

15. I do not accept a problem at face value, but search for the less obvious underlying factors driving the problem.

16. I find a way to "get it done" and will sacrifice personally to reach the goal line.

17. I have a thorough understanding of my own emotions and feelings and how they impact the situation at hand.

18. I give people a sense of personal fulfillment by recognizing their individual contributions in the achievement of a goal.

Leadership Self-Assessment (continued)

19. I consult outside resources (e.g., magazines and databases) in order to identify where my company, my industry, and the market are moving and to size up new business opportunities.

20. I take into account the potential implications of a decision on other people/departments within the organization before moving forward.

21. I stay the course mentally despite potential distractions and disruptions to my primary focus.

22. I control and selectively display my emotions and feelings in a beneficial way (e.g., I successfully channel my anger).

23. I help build shared goals and values to reinforce individual commitment to the organization.

24. I create viable new business ideas by thinking "out of the box," as well as in a sound business fashion.

25. I build and connect processes within my organization to assure that implementation remains constant and reliable.

26. I display stamina, energy, and intensity in achieving high standards of performance.

27. I express myself in consistent moods that invite participation and further communication with others.

28. I provide honest, clear feedback by focusing on the issue (and not the person) so that the person will accept and consider the feedback.

29. I ask "What if?" questions and play out scenarios to test new business ideas that challenge the status quo.

30. I assure that new ideas are integrated with established procedures/processes so that the organization can digest the new ideas.

31. I act decisively, with a passion for making things happen.

32. I recognize and consider the emotions and feelings of others before taking action.

33. I articulate a goal or vision and motivate others to help me reach that goal/vision.

34. I have the ability to create unorthodox or revolutionary concepts that have growth or profit potential.

35. I create synergy by involving the "right people" in all phases of work design and operational implementation.
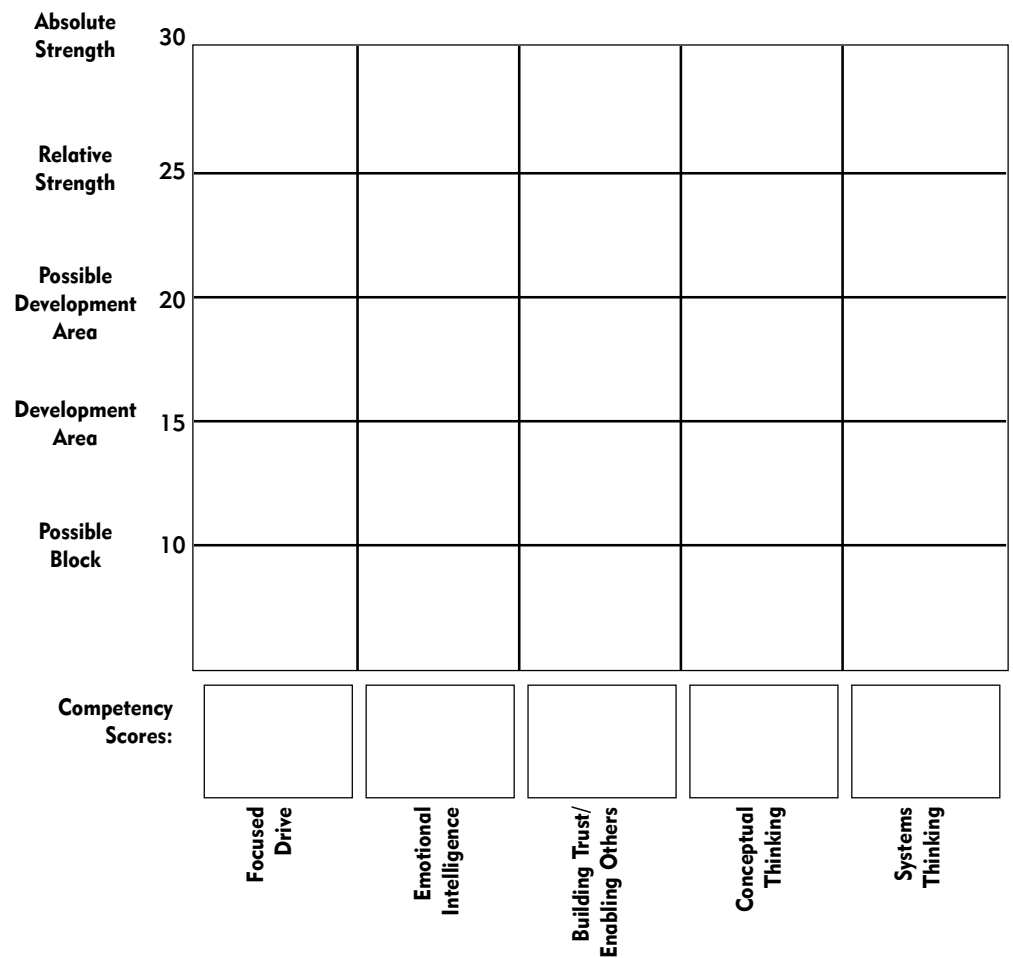
Leadership Self-Assessment (continued)

36. I demonstrate boldness in striving for ambitious goals rather than settling for the safety of achievable results.

37. I treat different people differently, with appropriate amounts of candor and sensitivity depending on each individual's own unique makeup.

38. I create shared responsibility among team members by building participation in decision making and delegating key tasks/functions.

39. I take the time to check whether a new idea is feasible before proceeding.

40. I pull together disparate ideas to create clear themes and pathways that may alleviate the confusion and anxiety of others.

41. I seek—and find—creative solutions to obstacles blocking the path to the goal line.

42. I accept rejection with grace and renewed determination, modeling to others how to handle failure.

43. I display trust in others by giving them additional responsibilities—and providing them with the appropriate tools and resources necessary to carry those responsibilities out.

44. I seek better solutions to problems instead of falling back on established protocol.

45. I demonstrate a commitment to continuous learning by documenting critically important action steps, i.e., I try to make sure that my organization does not "reinvent the wheel."

46. I effectively communicate the critical nature of the goal in a way that allows others to focus on that goal, as well.

47. I offer solutions, suggestions, and constructive criticism to others while also remaining open to additional possibilities.

48. I successfully help individuals and teams reach higher levels of performance, e.g., by displaying confidence in them at critical junctures.

49. I act receptive to the new ideas of others and try to improve or enhance them in a non-threatening manner.

50. I see an entity (e.g., my organization) not merely as a collection of isolated processes and parts, but as a unitary whole of interconnected processes.

Leadership Self-Assessment Answer Sheet

Focused Drive	Emotional Intelligence	Building Trust/ Enabling Others	Conceptual Thinking	Systems Thinking
1. _____	2. _____	3. _____	4. _____	5. _____
6. _____	7. _____	8. _____	9. _____	10. _____
11. _____	12. _____	13. _____	14. _____	15. _____
16. _____	17. _____	18. _____	19. _____	20. _____
21. _____	22. _____	23. _____	24. _____	25. _____
26. _____	27. _____	28. _____	29. _____	30. _____
31. _____	32. _____	33. _____	34. _____	35. _____
36. _____	37. _____	38. _____	39. _____	40. _____
41. _____	42. _____	43. _____	44. _____	45. _____
46. _____	47. _____	48. _____	49. _____	50. _____

TOTALS:

| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

Individual Development Planning:

Leadership Competencies

Competency Profile Sheet

1. Transfer your overall competency scores from the answer sheet to the corresponding boxes below.
2. Plot points on the graph using the scale on the left.
3. Connect the dots to see your overall competency profile.

Absolute Strength	**30**				
Relative Strength	**25**				
Possible Development Area	**20**				
Development Area	**15**				
Possible Block	**10**				
Competency Scores:					
		Focused Drive	**Emotional Intelligence**	**Building Trust/ Enabling Others**	**Conceptual Thinking**	**Systems Thinking**

SECTION 3

The Leadership Development Guide

The following activities are excerpts from the Leadership Development Guide, a guide researched and developed by Linkage, Inc. in partnership with Dr. Warren Bennis. These activities were selected because of their relevance to today's program.

Developing the Competency of Conceptual Thinking: The Innovation Component

Definition

The ability to create/enhance ideas, products, and services that lead to bottom-line success

Behaviors

■ Asks "What if?" questions to test assumptions and challenge the status quo

■ Seeks better solutions to problems instead of falling back on obvious ones

■ Demonstrates an ability to create new business ideas by thinking "out of the box"

■ Demonstrates creativity in making ideas and concepts better

■ Creates innovative concepts that have growth or profit potential

Exercise: New Product Ideas

The following exercise is one you can do either on your own or with a group.

1. Take an everyday object (such as a brick, or a toothbrush), and come up with as many uses for it as you can think of.

   Example: A brick could be used, among other things, as a paperweight, a weapon for self-defense, a bookend, a pedestal to support a vase or small statuette, a flyswatter or bug-smasher, a doorstop, or a stepping stone for crossing puddles.

2. Identify which of these uses could yield a product that would complement your organization's products or services.

   Example: Let's say your company owns and manages a chain of bookstores. You might print the name and logo of the company on bricks and sell them as hip "urban bookends."

Exercise: Your Conditions for Creativity

How often have you heard someone say, "I do my best thinking in the shower" or "I always seem to have my best ideas in my car on the way to work"? If you're like most people, there are probably certain conditions that are conducive to your thinking creatively, and others that hinder your creativity.

In this brief exercise, you'll try to identify what these conditions are.

1. Identify some times when you've been able to think creatively.

2. Think about what each of those times were like:
    - Were you alone, or with others?
    - If you were with others, who specifically were they?
    - Where were you (for example, indoors or outdoors, at home or at work)?
    - What was the space like (for example, bright or dark, cluttered or spare)?
    - What time of day was it?
    - What else was going on at the time (For example, was your schedule busy or light, were you under pressure or not)?

3. Try to identify patterns—that is, are there conditions that were common to most or all of the times when you were able to think creatively?

4. Repeat steps 1 to 3, this time for situations in which you were unable to think creatively.

5. In the future, when you need to think creatively, try to recreate the conditions that seemed to foster creativity in the past, while avoiding conditions that hindered creativity.

Daily Practices

■ When you're seeking new ideas or innovative solutions, or when you're faced with a problem for which there is no easy solution, do something different. Often, change is all it takes to send your thinking in new directions.

■ Change the conditions in which you work. For example, if you're working in an office, try taking a walk. If you're working alone, find someone to talk with. If you're working late in the day, try working first thing in the morning.

■ Change your methods. You might consider "thinking aloud" by talking things out with a colleague. Or, create interesting and unusual metaphors for the topic or issue you face and think through all the characteristics and implications of seeing it in these different ways.

■ Change your medium. For example, rather than thinking it through alone, try using a computer or paper and pen, writing non-stop for five minutes. Record your thoughts unedited, then read your thoughts with an eye toward emerging insights, connections, and possibilities. Or, draw a picture that symbolically represents either the issue you face or your relationship to the issue.

■ Practice asking "What if?" questions. Do this by first identifying something you take for granted (such as gravity, your organization's core product line or lines, or the fact that people only have two arms!) Then try to imagine what all the implications would be if that fact you take for granted were no longer the case: What would life be like if there was no gravity? If your organization had to totally reconfigure its product lines? If people regularly had different numbers of arms?

As with the new products exercise, above, this is a great practice to use with a group. For example, it's helpful as a way of "limbering up" people's minds at the start of a meeting.

■ Institute regular brainstorming or creativity forums, where people come together with no purpose other than thinking up new ideas or ways of doing things. The only outcome of such meetings should be lists of possibilities to be explored further, and commitments to meet again to analyze the possibilities.

■ Make it a regular practice to read articles or books in areas about which you know very little. These should offer new perspectives on your areas of expertise and help enrich your approach to strategic thinking and problem solving.

Activities, Assignments, and Projects

■ Lead or participate on a team charged with "scanning" the organization's environment to identify critical trends that may affect the organization in the future.

■ Lead or participate on a team charged with solving a difficult problem faced by the organization.

■ Seek a developmental assignment in a function that requires "out of the box" thinking, such as research and development or marketing.

■ Creativity and innovation are enhanced when we work differently with the material before us and/or when we represent that material in a fresh way. When you encounter a difficult issue or problem for which there is no easy solution, consider inventive activities as alternatives to simply thinking through something alone or "talking it out" as a team.

■ Write nonstop for five minutes, recording your unedited thoughts on paper.

■ Create an interesting and unusual metaphor for the topic or issue and think through all the characteristics and implications of seeing it this way.

■ Draw a picture that symbolically represents either the issue you face or your relationship to the issue.

Readings and Other Self-Study Resources

- Albrecht, Karl, *Brain Power: Learn to Improve Your Thinking Skills.* Prentice Hall, 1987. This book introduces six functional thinking abilities needed to become an adaptive, innovative thinker. The author shows how to use creative problem solving strategies to become a more efficient and effective thinker and provides illustrations, games, and puzzles to stimulate and expand your brain power.

- Bennis, Warren, and Patricia Ward Biederman, *Organizing Genius.* Addison-Wesley Publishing, 1997. Today all organizations require creative thinking from every member, not just a few. The world's complexity and pace mean that we can no longer rely on individual leaders and "Lone Rangers" to solve our problems. Rather we must learn to work together, to identify our own Great Groups. The fascinating stories and wise advice in *Organizing Genius* show us how.

- Brown, M. Neil and Stuart M. Keeley, *Asking the Right Questions.* New York: Prentice Hall, 1990. This test was designed to help readers bridge the gap between simple memorization and critical analysis and synthesis. The authors teach readers how to react rationally to alternative points of view and to develop a solid foundation for making personal choices about what to accept and what to reject as they read and listen.

- *Conceptual Blockbusting: A Guide to Better Ideas.* Addison-Wesley Publishing, 1990. This book explores the nature of creation and the capacity of each individual to be more creative. Includes techniques on how to recognize barriers to creativity and develop ways to overcome them.

- DeBono, Edward, *Lateral Thinking: Creativity Step-By-Step.* HarperCollins. 1991. This book introduces a new way of reasoning and decision making through encouraging lateral thinking. Special techniques are taught to generate these new ideas.

- Fritz, Robert, *Creating*, Ballantine Books, 1991. This book brings you a series of practical exercises to help you create what you want. It will help to train you in the creative process and give you practical ways to use those skills to achieve the results you want.

- *Innovative Project Teams,* video, 40 min., Harvard Business School, 1998. What could a power company, a surgical instrument manufacturer, and a newspaper publisher possibly have in common—problem so critical that it is literally threatening their survival. This video will show your managers that harnessing the power and innovation of teams can solve the most daunting of problems, often getting more done for less.

- Leonard, Dorothy, *Wellsprings of Knowledge.* Harvard Business School, 1998. Why are some companies better at managing innovation than others? With her pioneering book on knowledge management, Dorothy Leonard was among the first to probe the relationship between successful innovators and the way they create, nurture, and grow the experience and accumulated knowledge of their organization. The book is illustrated with examples of successes and failures in new product development, continuing to provide managers with the key knowledge-building activities they need to guide, control, and inspire.

- Nadler, Gerald, and Shozo Hibino, *Breakthrough Thinking: The Seven Principles of Creative Problem Solving*, Prima Publishing, 1994. This American/Japanese collaboration contains the results of the authors' ground-breaking studies on how the most intuitive and creative leaders and organizations solve problems. They show how to improve incorrect thinking, which they contend accounts for the failure of many enterprises.

- Perkins, David, *Knowledge as Design*. Lawrence Erlbaum Assoc., 1986. This book will help you to analyze your thinking process, especially the creative analytical process.

- Quinn, James Brian et. al., *Innovation Explosion*. Jossey-Bass, 1997. Here is a new book on how both entrepreneurs and nations can develop, harness, and utilize intellect, science, and technology to maximize innovation and growth. With co-authors Jordan J. Baruch and Karen Anne Zien, Quinn reveals in practical terms how successful firms can intertwine intellectual capital and modern software capabilities to cut innovation cycle times by 90%, costs by 75%, and risks by 60% or more, and thereby revolutionize all aspects of innovation management, corporate strategy, national policy, and even economics.

- Von Oech, Roger, *A Whack on the Side of the Head*. Warner Books, 1993. The author provides puzzles, exercises, metaphors, questions, stories and tips to help you systematically break through your mental blocks and unlock your mind for creative thinking. This book will help you to come up with new approaches to old problems.

Developing the Skill of Change Management

Definition

The skill of adapting to and thriving in times of internal or external change.

Behaviors

- Can successfully provide a visible anchor for others in times of great change, e.g., by reaffirming key goals/values
- Can help detect/resolve team breakdowns resulting from change
- Can convince others of the need for change due to critical organizational objectives
- Can develop new skills or behavior to adapt to turbulent times and continual change
- Can recognize (and help remedy) individual/collective barriers to the implementation of change

Exercise: The Wisdom to Know the Difference

There's a famous saying, "May God grant me the strength to change the things I can, the patience to accept the things I can't, and the wisdom to know the difference."

One of the greatest barriers to productivity in times of change is worry-about contingencies, about personal risk, about organizational outcomes. At times, people find this worry literally paralyzing; every alternative appears fraught with peril, so they end up doing nothing-even though doing nothing is itself a choice with its own consequences.

If worry is a problem for you, try this exercise.

1. Consider a change you are currently experiencing, either on the job or in your personal life. Write down every worry you have regarding the change.

2. Now divide these worries into two categories: Those you have at least some control over, and those you don't have control over.

   • For the worries you have at least some control over, identify and commit to the actions you can take to minimize the possibility of the worry coming to pass.

   • For each worry over which you have no control, identify what you will do if it comes to pass.

Exercise: Planning A Change

Consider a change you tried unsuccessfully to implement. Answer the following questions about the change:

1. Was a sense of urgency established?

2. Was the urgency used to build a powerful coalition to sponsor the change?

3. Was a shared vision created?

4. Was the vision communicated to the organization?

5. Were others provided the necessary skills, resources, and incentives that enabled them to act on the vision?

6. Were short-term wins planned for and created?

7. Was the change reinforced as a means to sustain it?

If you are unable to answer "yes" to one or more of these questions, you may have uncovered the reasons for the difficulties you have encountered. Test this diagnosis by discussing it with your colleagues or others who were involved in or affected by the change.

If the change is one you are currently implementing, adjust your plans to incorporate what you've learned.

Daily Practices

Many of us have an innate bias against change, whether because we fear it will impact our interests, because we are comfortable in our current routine, because we were not involved in designing the change, or for other reasons. While a certain level of caution is good, this bias against change can lead to missed opportunity and conflict with others.

One way to diagnose this bias in yourself is to monitor your first, instinctive response when you hear of any actual or proposed change. If you tend to think or speak first about the risks of the change, the difficulties involved in implementing the change, or the negative consequences of the change, you likely have this anti-change bias to one degree or another.

To begin moving toward a more balanced stance toward change, practice changing the questions you ask about changes:

- "How will this change benefit me?"
- "How will it benefit the organization?"
- "What will I/we learn from the change?"
- "What are the new opportunities opened up by the change?"

Often the single greatest obstacle to change is the perception of those affected by the change. Typically, resistance occurs when there is a perception that:

- The change harms people's interests (by reducing power, affecting job security and/or income, and so on).
- The change is not being communicated honestly.

When communicating about a change, therefore, ask yourself:

- What's in it for those affected by the change?
- If the answer is "nothing," expect resistance.
- Can I communicate honestly and completely about the change?

If the answer is "no," expect resistance. People will fill in the information gaps with their own interpretations, which will usually be unfavorable to the change you wish to make.

- Use a change methodology or model to take a disciplined approach to planning and implementing changes. Such models usually consist of a series of steps and/or a series of questions. John Kotter's model, introduced in the first exercise above, is just one example of such a methodology.

■ Regularly read a high-quality newspaper, news journal, or business journal. Look for examples of change efforts, whether in the past or ongoing, successful or unsuccessful, and analyze them in terms of a change model. If the efforts are completed, try to identify what made them successful or unsuccessful; if they are in progress, try to predict their likelihood of success.

Activities, Assignments, and Projects

■ Assign yourself the task of identifying a person in your organization who has been successful at implementing change. Interview this person and ask the following questions:

■ What are the critical success factors for implementing change in this organization?

■ What are the critical mistakes people tend to make when trying to implement change in this organization?

■ Describe a change you implemented successfully and what made it successful.

■ Describe a change you were unsuccessful in implementing and what made it unsuccessful.

You might also structure the conversation by asking the person to discuss a successful change in terms of the seven steps for implementing change from Kotter's model introduced in the second exercise, above.

If you can't interview the person, you might analyze a successful change they implemented by considering each of the seven questions introduced in the second exercise.

■ Participate in a change effort in your organization. This might involve a large change such as introducing or redesigning a process, implementing a new strategy, or restructuring. It might also involve a small, simple change, such as changing a personnel policy, adjusting a standard operating procedure, or redistributing responsibilities in your group. Be prepared to find that some "simple" changes are not so simple after all!

■ Participate in a change effort in your community. This might involve building support for a new community program, working door-to-door to gain signatures on a petition, or even volunteering in an election campaign.

Readings and Other Self-Study Resources

- Block, Peter, *The Empowered Manager: Positive Political Skills at Work*. Jossey-Bass, 1990. Block shows managers how to break out of the bureaucratic mode of thinking and take more responsibility for the workings of their unit. He explains how managers can become empowered to make positive changes in their organization and develop an entrepreneurial spirit in themselves and in members of their unit.

- Cohen, Allan C., and David L. Bradford, *Influence without Authority*. John Wiley and Sons, 1990. The authors offer powerful new techniques for cutting through interpersonal and interdepartmental barriers, and for motivating people over whom you have no authority.

- Connor, Daryl, *Managing at the Speed of Change*. Villard Books, 1992. In today's world, it's not enough to recognize that you and the way you do business need to change. You must know how to make changes quickly, effectively, economically, and with as little political fallout as possible. Everywhere, concern is heard about those trying to adapt to the rapid flux created by an uncertain economy, ever-changing market demands, and the threat of international competition. The author teaches managers to negotiate these future transitions.

- Handy, Charles, *The Age of Paradox*. Harvard Business School Press, 1994. The author suggests that in order to live and succeed in a rapidly changing world, we must organize in our minds the confusion generated by these changes before we can do anything about them. Managing business, family, education, money, and relationships are just some of the many topics covered. Through a discussion of these topics, strategies for maintaining a sense of continuity and direction and balancing personal and professional responsibilities are provided.

- Kanter, Rosabeth Moss, *The Change Masters*. Simon and Schuster, 1983. This book vividly demonstrates that when environments and structures are hospitable to innovation, people's natural inventiveness and power skills can make almost anything happen. Kanter's book is an indispensable guide for individuals who seek to realize their entrepreneurial potential, for corporate leaders who want to see their companies grow, and for all those concerned with the economic future of the nation. Included are searches for innovation by companies such as Hewlett-Packard, General Electric, Polaroid, General Motors, and Honeywell.

- Kotter, John P, *Leading Change*. Harvard Business School Press, 1996. The author examines the efforts of more than 100 companies to remake themselves into better competitors. He identifies the most common mistakes leaders and managers make in attempting to create change and offers an eight-step process to overcome the obstacles and carry out the firm's agenda.

- Kotter, John P., "Leading Change: Why Transformation Efforts Fail." *Harvard Business Review*, March/April 1995. This article is a condensed version of the author's book listed above.

- Machiavelli, Niccolo, *The Prince*. Prometheus Books, 1986. Although writing for the leaders of rough-and-tumble Renaissance Italy, Machiavelli offers much of value to the modern leader, both in positive and negative models of how to influence large groups under complex circumstances.

- O'Toole, J., *Leading Change*. Ballantine Books, 1996. True leaders lead by encouraging, not oppressing. And the finest leaders have always shared leadership with their followers. Rather than dictating, they create organizations that welcome change and self-reevaluation, and they foster an atmosphere of open-mindedness and fresh thinking. This book proposes a new vision of leadership, one rooted in moral values and a consistent display of respect for all followers.

- Smith, Douglas K., *Taking Charge of Change*. Addison-Wesley, 1996. This book provides deep insight into organizational psychology and practical steps for mastering it. The author discusses the diagnostic tools needed to assess an organization's particular needs for change and provides the tool kit required to implement the changes.

- Troy, Kathryn, *Change Management: Communication's Pivotal Role*. The Conference Board, 1995. To deal with the challenges of communicating effectively in a fast-changing business environment, companies are taking several initiatives. Most notably, they are working to better define audiences and messages, develop the communication capabilities of managers and employees, and use emerging technologies to maximum advantage. This study documents their progress to date and discusses how to implement change strategies and measure results. It is based on a survey of 130 U.S. and European companies and contains nine company exhibits.

Developing the Skill of Communication

Definition

The skill of communicating and relating to a broad range of people internally and externally

Behaviors

■ Can represent and articulate viewpoints in a way that positively influences the dialogue

■ Can communicate effectively with individuals up, down, and across the organization

■ Can distill ideas into focused messages that inspire support/action from others

■ Can present opinions accurately and persuasively—both one-on-one and to a group

■ Can effectively channel his/her communication with all those who need to be informed

Exercise: Analyzing Your Communication

Reflect on a recent purposeful communication you made that didn't have the effect you intended. The audience might have been one person or many, someone you know or people you don't know. The medium might have been a face-to-face conversation, the phone, an e-mail, a memo, a speech, or any other type.

1. Answer these questions about the communication:

   • What was the purpose of the communication?

   • Who was the audience for the communication?

   • How did the content of the communication affect the interests and needs of the audience?

2. Was the medium used appropriately in light of the communication's purpose, the audience, and the audience's interests and needs?

   If the answer to the second question is "no," identify now what would have been an appropriate medium.

3. Now answer these questions:

- How did you "frame" the message?
- Was this frame appropriate in light of the purpose, the audience, and the audience's interests and needs?

If the answer to the second question is "no," consider now how you would reframe the message.

Exercise: Visualizing Your Communication

Reflect on a recent purposeful communication you made that didn't have the effect you intended. The audience might have been one person or many, someone you know or people you don't know. The medium might have been a face-to-face conversation, the phone, an e-mail, a memo, a speech, or any other type.

1. Use your imagination to put yourself in the place of someone who received the communication. Specifically, imagine that you are that person and are just about to receive the communication.

- What are you doing?
- How are you feeling?
- What is your relationship to the sender?
- What is your opinion of the sender (e.g., the level of trust and respect)?

2. Now, still putting yourself in that person's place, imagine actually receiving the communication.

- What is the message you get?
- How do you feel about the message?
- What do you want to do in response to the message?

3. Now that you've visualized the other person's experience of your communication, consider whether you like what you've "seen." How, if at all, would you change the communication if you could do it over again?

Daily Practices

■ Audiotape or videotape one or more of your presentations and review them critically with someone you trust.

■ Identify someone you respect as an effective communicator in an area in which you need development, such as presentations or one-on-one conversations. Observe their style and the techniques they use, and experiment with incorporating these into your own communication.

■ As a leader, a key aspect of your communication competency is your ability to create an environment in which people communicate frequently and openly with one another. To achieve this, try creating a regular forum for communicating with your peers or those who report to you. This should provide opportunities for both presentation and discussion of information, rather than simply "information dumps."

For example, you might design your staff meetings so that you are not the sole disseminator of information. Involve those who report to you in giving updates on departmental, divisional, and/or organizational news and sharing other relevant information.

Alternatively, you might hold breakfast "brainstorming" meetings, where you encourage a freewheeling discussion of issues, problems, and opportunities.

■ One of the keys to effective communication is to clearly explain your reasoning and to help others do the same.

When stating your point of view ("advocating"), follow these three steps:

1. State your opinion: "I think/believe/want X."

2. Explain your reasoning: "I think/believe/want X, because . . ."

3. Ask for the listener's feedback: "What do you think of this reasoning?"

When listening to others ("inquiring"), follow these three steps:

1. Pay careful attention.

2. Summarize or paraphrase what you hear, and ask for confirmation: "I hear you saying that . . . Is that right?"

3. Ask the other person to explain their reasoning: "That's interesting. What's the reasoning behind your point of view?"

■ Speak regularly with people at different levels and from other functions and divisions of the organization. When doing so, pay special attention to:

- The language they use

- How they respond to the language you use

- The issues and themes they are most concerned with

Be prepared to find very different kinds of language, issues, and communication styles—communication "subcultures," as it were. Experiment with how you communicate with people in each of these "subcultures," until you find what works.

■ Plan more carefully the messages you convey to others, whether in one-on-one conversations, presentations, or organizational communications. To do this, ask yourself three questions:

1. What is the purpose of the message I want to convey?

2. Who needs to have the information, either because

    - It is necessary for them to do their job?

    - It affects their interests (security, power, finances) in some way?

    - They believe they ought to know?

3. How are their needs and interests affected by the content of the message? Based on the answers to these questions, choose an appropriate medium for the message and "frame" the message accordingly.

Activities, Assignments, and Projects

■ Seek opportunities to develop and make presentations to large or small groups in your business or your community. For example, you might take on responsibility for providing regular updates to your management, your peers, or those who report to you.

■ Volunteer to participate on or lead a cross-functional and/or cross-divisional team.

■ Take a cross-functional assignment in a sales or marketing role, in which you are responsible for designing and/or communicating messages to customers.

■ Read the texts of famous speeches, such as those by Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King Jr., Margaret Thatcher, Franklin Roosevelt, or Vaclav Havel. Pay special attention to their ability to distill ideas into focused messages that inspire support and action from others.

Readings and Other Self-Study Resources

- Brown, Juanita, and David Isaacs. "Conversation as a Core Business Process." *The Systems Thinker*, Pegasus Communications, Inc., 1996.

- Decker, Bert, *You've Got to Be Believed to Be Heard*. St. Martin's Press, 1992. Effective communication is essential in business and in everyday life. The most powerful communicators reach not just our minds, but our hearts: they win our trust. In this book, the author distills his expertise into a fresh new approach to speaking, with examples and how-to exercises that are easy to follow. The book emphasizes how to win the emotional trust of others—the true basis of communicating in any situation.

- Donnellon, Anne, *Team Talk*. Harvard Business School Press, 1996. *Team Talk* will help managers and team members develop a clearer picture of the whole organization—its strengths, its weaknesses, and its ability to support teams—as reflected in the way its teams communicate every day.

- Dumaine, Deborah, *Write to the Top*. Random House, 1989. This book provides a proven, six-step method for writing high-impact, audience-focused business communications. It helps you to plan your strategy, get started quickly, organize your ideas, create visual impact, and achieve the results you want.

- Gudykunst, William B., *Bridging Differences: Effective Intergroup Communication*. Sage Publications, 1994. This book is particularly useful for those who work with people from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. The author shows how stereotypes lead to ineffective communication, including misinterpretation of messages we receive from members of cultural and ethnic groups different from our own.

- Larkin, T.J., and S. Larkin, "Reaching and Changing Frontline Employees." *Harvard Business Review*, May/June 1996. Despite research showing that frontline employees prefer to receive information from their supervisor (the person to whom they are closest), companies continue to depend on charismatic executives to inspire their troops. This doesn't work because frontline supervisors are the real opinion leaders in any company. Senior managers must discuss a change face-to-face with supervisors, who will pass information along to their subordinates. Communication between frontline supervisors and employees counts the most toward changed behavior where it matters most: at the front line.

- McCallister, Linda, Ph.D., *I Wish I'd Said That*. Wiley & Sons, 1992. The author describes in detail the six major styles of communication: Nobel, Socratic, Reflective, Magistrate, Candidate, and Senator. By identifying and recognizing these communication styles, you can learn how to control interactions without building a resentment. Also provided is a Communication Style Profile test so you can identify your communication style and learn how to communicate more effectively.

■ Pearce, T., *Leading Out Loud*. Jossey-Bass, 1995. The most effective leader is the one who can "lead out loud," connecting people with a vision and inspiring them to make that vision their own. This veteran communication consultant shows that the best way to get true commitment, not just compliance, is to speak from the heart. The speeches of Ross Perot, Hillary Rodham Clinton, Anita Roddick, and others are analyzed.

■ Tannen, Deborah, *You Just Don't Understand*. Ballantine Books, 1991. This book focuses on the sense of frustration that men and women feel when trying to communicate with each other. The author uses examples ranging from real life to literary realism, demonstrating how—even in the closest relationships—women and men live in different worlds.

■ Woodall, Marian K., *How to Think on Your Feet*. Warner Books, 1993. This concise book provides techniques for improving the quickness and quality of responses to difficult questions. The author also provides guidance on how to quickly and clearly formulate answers, as well as improve the delivery of the communication.

SECTION 4

Forms

Idea Marketing

Question Sheet

Use this form to write your question for Seth Godin or for discussion among your colleagues. Please write clearly.

Name (optional) ————————————————————————————

Organization ————————————————————————————

Location ————————————————————————————

Your question (25 words or less):

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Tel   1-800-489-8814 (from within U.S.)
        801-303-7412 (from outside U.S.)

Fax   1-877-892-0170 (from within U.S.)
        646-349-3661 (from outside U.S.)

Email   leadership2001@linkage-inc.com

LINKAGE EXCELLENCE IN MANAGEMENT & LEADERSHIP EVALUATION FORM

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO YOUR SITE COORDINATOR OR FAX TO 781-862-2355.

NAME_____ TITLE_____

ORGANIZATION_____

PHONE_____EMAIL_____

Please indicate functional area (only check one):

❏ Finance ❏ Human Resources ❏ Manufacturing/Operations ❏ Marketing ❏ R&D ❏ Sales ❏ Other (specify)_____

How many people do you have reporting to you (include all levels)? Number:_____

Please indicate your job level (only circle one):

❏ President or Officer ❏ Vice President or Director ❏ Manager/Supervisor ❏ Team Leader ❏ Sales Rep. ❏ Customer Service Rep.
❏ HR, T&D, OD Practitioner ❏ Other: _____

1) Please indicate a rating for each of the following evaluation criteria by checking the appropriate box.

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
Length of Presentation	❏	❏	❏	❏
Effective presente	❏	❏	❏	❏
Useful participant materials	❏	❏	❏	❏
Useful question and answer	❏	❏	❏	❏
Live (versus taped) broadcast important	❏	❏	❏	❏

2) Please give a general overall comment about the program. _____
_____

3) Can Linkage use this comment for promotional purposes (including name and organization)? ❏ YES ❏ NO

4) On a scale of 1-10 (10 = Outstanding), how would you rate this satellite broadcast session? Rating:_____

5) How many viewers would you estimate attended this event (in the room with you)? Number:_____

6) Which speakers are you most interested in seeing at the next Linkage Satellite (Distance Learning) Learning Series?
(Please rate your top ten, "1" being most interested, "10" being least interested)

___ Peter Senge	___ Jeff Bezos	___ Carly Fiorina
___ Steve Case	___ Clayton Christensen	___ Elizabeth Dole
___ Maya Angelou	___ Don Tapscott	___ Nicholas Negroponte
___ Doris Kearns Goodwin	___ Michael Porter	___ Tom Peters
___Francis Hesselbein	___John Kotter	___ Anna Quindlen
___Michael Hammer	___Noel Tichy	___ Andy Grove
___Gary Hamel	___James Champy	___ John Chambers
		___Other_____